

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims are 1-4 and 53-54. Claims 1 and 53 have been amended to better define the invention. In addition, new claim 54 has been added. Support for the claims may be found, *inter alia*, in the original claims and FIGS. 6-8. Reconsideration is expressly requested.

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite in the use of the term "slight" which the Examiner considered to be a relative term lacking proper comparative basis. In response, Applicants have, *inter alia*, amended claim 1 to specify that the welding torch is in the same position during application of the cleaning liquid or wetting liquid and the subsequent exposure to an electromagnetic field and have added new claim 54 specifying a second position immediately adjacent to the first position where the cleaning or wetting liquid is applied in a longitudinal direction of the welding torch where contactless removal of foreign substances takes place. It is respectfully submitted that the foregoing amendments overcome the rejection to the claims under 35 U.S.C.

112, second paragraph, and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection on this basis be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by *Baum et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,891,127*. The remaining claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Baum et al. '127* in view of any one of *U.S. Patent No. 4,702,195 to Thielmann, U.S. Patent No. 4,778,976 to Litt et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,834,280 to Thielmann, or U.S. Patent No. 5,138,969 to Thielmann*. (As before, the Final Office Action refers to "5,138,896;" however, as indicated in a telephone conference with the Examiner on September 25, 2008 with respect to the previous Office Action, the correct number should be as listed on the "Notice of References Cited" Form PTO-892 attached to the previous Office Action, namely *U.S. Patent No. 5,138,969.*)

In response, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 53 and have added new claim 54 to better define the invention and respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection for the following reasons.

As set forth in claims 1 and 53 as amended, and in new claim 54, Applicants' invention provides a method for cleaning welding torches in which a device 15 for cutting the welding wire 16 is arranged below the coil 3. This cutting device 15 makes it possible to cut the welding wire without changing the position of the welding torch with the exception of slight changes in the longitudinal direction. In addition, as recited in claims 1 and 53 as amended, and in new claim 54, at least one nozzle or a tub for applying the tip with the cleaning liquid is located below the coil 3 to enable the application of the cleaning liquid onto the welding torch without changing the position of the welding torch. In addition, a waste receptacle 6 is arranged in the region below the coil 3. In this way, it is possible to cut the welding wire, to apply cleaning liquid, or to catch the waste during the cleaning process without changing the position of the welding torch with the exception of slight changes in the longitudinal direction.

The primary reference to Baum et al. '127 fails to disclose or suggest a method for cleaning welding torches having components arranged below the coil as recited in Applicants'

claims so as to make possible the cutting of the welding wire, the applying of the cleaning liquid, and the catching of the waste during the cleaning process without changing the position of the welding torch with the exception of slight changes in position in the longitudinal direction. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 53 as amended, and new claim 54, together with claim 4 which depends on claim 1 as amended, are patentable over *Baum et al.*.

The remaining references cited with respect to claim 3 have been considered but are believed to be no more relevant. None of these references discloses or suggests a method for cleaning welding torches whereby on the welding torch a cleaning or wetting liquid is applied and the tip of the welding torch is subsequently exposed to an electromagnetic field for the contactless removal of foreign substances. In addition, none of these references show a welding torch being substantially in the same position during application of the cleaning or wetting liquid and the subsequent exposure to an electromagnetic field.

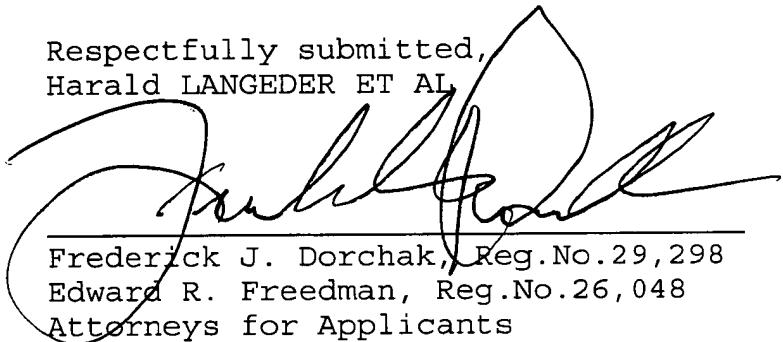
Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the claims

are patentable over the cited references.

In summary, claims 1 and 53 have been amended and new claim 54 has been added. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this application be passed to issue.

Applicants also submit herewith a Third Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement.

Respectfully submitted,
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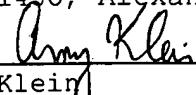
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Enclosure: Third Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement, Form PTO-1449 with one (1) reference, English translation of the International Preliminary Report on Patentability and Written Opinion of the International Searching Authority

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Amy Klein

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